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New NSC chief seen safe choice though Viguerie voices 'shock'

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Frank C. Carlucci, President Reagan's fifth national security adviser in six years, is considered a safe choice at a critical time for the administration.

Mr. Carlucci, like his predecessors, is expected to keep a low profile and be a president's man. He is not expected to push new policy initiatives.

The current crisis over U.S. arms sales to Iran and low morale on the National Security Council staff will test his bureaucratic skills to the fullest. He is entering uncharted waters, because there is no precedent like this in the NSC's 40-year history.

Nevertheless, Mr. Carlucci enters office with some strong cards. He is an experienced, professional civil servant who has done stints in the Foreign Service and filled the No. 2 spots at the CIA, the Department of Defense and the Office of Management and Budget.

His strongest supporters for the job are CIA Director William Casey, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and Secretary of State George Shultz, all of whom are key members of the NSC.

"He has high-powered friends and admirers on both sides of the aisle," said one intimate.

Conspicuously absent from this list of supporters is White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan, who informed sources say pushed another candidate, William Hyland, currently editor of Foreign Affairs, a quarterly journal of the Council on Foreign Relations. Sources also indicate that Mr. Carlucci's appointment is another sign of Mr. Regan's rumored departure from the White House.

Mr. Carlucci has a far greater variety of experience in government and its management than any of his predecessors. As Mr. Reagan told the nation yesterday, he is "uniquely qualified."

Mr. Carlucci has also built a reputation for making things work under adverse conditions — a reputation which he will have to earn again, as the demoralized NSC staff will be subjected to months of investigations.

Critics are skeptical of his management skills, pointing to his foray into private sector top management beginning in 1982 at Sears World Trade Inc. He headed the trading company until it was dissolved a month ago after losing a reported \$60 million.

Mr. Carlucci has since operated his own Washington-based consulting firm, International Planning Analysis Center, with reported annual billings of \$4.5 million.

During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, the 56-year-old

Pennsylvania native served in various diplomatic assignments in Africa and Latin America.

He headed federal anti-poverty programs at the old Office of Economic Opportunity and was No. 2 under Mr. Weinberger at the Office of Management and Budget during President Richard M. Nixon's first term.

Mr. Carlucci again served as Mr. Weinberger's deputy as undersecretary of Health, Education and Welfare after Mr. Nixon's re-election in 1972.

Although he is an experienced foreign policy hand, Mr. Carlucci left government service more than four years ago, and it will take time for him to familiarize himself with the issues and the detail necessary to be an effective manager of national security policy. He has no association with the present Iran-induced troubles of the White House, which will keep him from being dragged into the on-going controversy.

He will have to bring in his own immediate staff, which will contribute to the awkwardness of the transition. He also will have to forge a working relationship with a president who feels uneasy with new faces. But his reputation as "a team

player" will go down well in the White House in general and with Mr. Reagan in particular.

Mr. Carlucci has critics. "He's just a bureaucrat with no fixed philosophy or beliefs in the foreign policy arena," a former senior NSC official said.

Conservative activist Richard Viguerie said he reacted with "shock and disbelief" at the appointment. "This signals the end of the Reagan

revolution. It's gone. They are going to play the establishment game. He is totally capitulated to the Washington establishment."

Conservatives have resisted his earlier appointments and distrusted Mr. Carlucci's record of serving both Democratic and Republican administrations.

The suspicion that he does not share the president's beliefs, is reinforced, they say by Mr. Carlucci's testimony at hearings that confirmed him as deputy secretary of defense. He summarized his political philosophy to a Senate committee by saying, "We all have to compromise. That's what it's all about."

During Jimmy Carter's presidency, Mr. Carlucci was deputy director of the CIA.

In 1977, Mr. Carlucci was first told by a reporter who had known him for many years that he had been chosen by then-CIA director Adm. Stansfield Turner for the agency's No. 2 post, the reporter said.

Mr. Carlucci responded, "That's [expletive], I barely know the man," the reporter said. Mr. Carlucci said he had met Adm. Turner only once in West Germany at a tennis game with Gen. Alexander Haig.

"So how did you get the job?" the reporter asked. "[Former Vice President] Fritz Mondale, I was his choice," Mr. Carlucci replied.

"In those days, it was fashionable to brag about one's Democratic contacts," the reporter said. "'How did you get to know Mondale?' I asked him."

Mr. Carlucci explained that, as director of the OEO years earlier, "he was Mondale's contact in the Nixon administration . . . and kept Mondale [then a Democratic senator from Minnesota] up to speed on what was going on," the reporter said.

Mr. Carlucci first came to national attention in November 1960 by rescuing a carload of Americans from an angry mob in the Congolese capital of Leopoldville after a local citizen was killed in a traffic accident. He barely escaped with his life after being stabbed in the back of the neck during the rescue.

Fifteen years later, as President Ford's ambassador to Lisbon, Mr. Carlucci was credited with saving Portugal from joining the Soviet bloc when, according to intimates, then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had "written off" the country as going to the communists.

With \$50 million from the CIA and West Germany's Social Democratic Party, arranged by former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Mr. Carlucci quietly backed Portuguese Socialist Party leader Mario Soares as an alternative to the communists in the country's 1975 Constituent Assembly elections.

Following the Socialist election victory, Mr. Carlucci then prevailed over Mr. Kissinger's view that U.S. aid to Portugal's leftist military regime at the time should be cut off.

Mr. Carlucci's support for the Portuguese Socialists riled prominent conservatives then backing Mr. Reagan instead of President Gerald Ford for the 1976 GOP presidential nomination. The conservatives also were angry over Mr. Carlucci's support at OEO for continued funding of federal legal services programs, which then-Gov. Reagan was trying to cut off in California.

In 1981, when Mr. Reagan became president, some of his conservative advisers tried to prevent Mr. Carlucci's appointment as No. 2 man at the Pentagon. But Defense Secretary Weinberger insisted on the appointment.